

# Valley Women's Voice

MARCH

☿ A Chronicle of Feminist Thought and Action ☿

1992



## DECIDING ON COMMUNITY: WOMEN DISCUSS THE NORTHAMPTON PRIDE MARCH '92



by Jami Porter-Lara and Carol McMaster

*The name of the Pride March and its implications for our definition of community has seemed to monopolize Lesbian and Bisexual women's politics in the Valley. Not surprisingly, the public vote has not quelled the intensity of the conflict, and as one woman has commented, one day out of the year continues to consume 364 days of our political energies.*

*We provide part of this month's issue as a printed forum in the interest of understanding various conceptions of community, with the assumption on our part that the definition of community is political, and that communities are based on common political values. We feel that if effective and disciplined political work is going to be accomplished on issues other than this one, it will be important for all communities to identify their concerns and goals, and to decide with whom they are or are not willing to coalition with. As we become active, who we are will be manifest in what we do.*

*We asked several different lesbian and bisexual women to comment on the debate over bisexual inclusion and lesbian identity surrounding the public vote of February 2, 1992. This is not intended to be a definitive or exhaustive record of women's thoughts on these matters. The process by which these opinions were solicited was informal, and women are encouraged to respond in this space in upcoming issues.*

### OPINIONS...

Chaia Z. Heller

It is a great failure of liberal theory to reduce all individuals to abstract "equals" even in the face of social hierarchies which oppress individuals in distinctive and unequal ways. In the discussion of whether the term "bisexual" should be included in this year's Pride March, the underlying rationale has been that lesbians, gays and bisexuals all share a common or "equal" oppression and therefore, all should be included "equally" in the title. Any attempt to express the distinctiveness of lesbian and gay experience by specifically calling the event "lesbian and gay pride", is framed as lesbian and gays "oppressing" bisexual people. The fact is, whereas lesbians and gays, as a social category, can emotionally alienate and upset bisexual people, we do not have the social, institutional or economic power to oppress bisexuals.

Calling the march "lesbian, gay and bisexual" erases the distinctiveness of the already diverse lesbian experience within heteropatriarchy. Whereas the term 'lesbian' already accounts for a complex and varied

body of women, it points to a category of women who do share the pride and punishment for *primarily loving women*, and for not *primarily loving men*. Even if a lesbian does include and enjoy men in her life, by calling herself a lesbian, she is often targeted and penalized as a "man-hater." In a heavily enforced heteropatriarchy such as ours, the choice or condition of *not primarily loving men* often means the loss of jobs, housing, children and even a lesbian's own life. In this way, the lesbian, by definition within heteropatriarchy, is daily punished for doing the thing that the bisexual woman does not do; and that is to not *primarily love men*. In short, a little bit of man-loving goes a long, long way within a patriarchal context.

My interest here is not to say that lesbians are "better" or more moral than bisexual women. Nor am I asserting that bisexuality is a good or a bad choice. I merely wish to assert that within our given patriarchal context, the social implications of bisexuality are dramatically different from the implications of lesbianism. And lesbians should have the opportunity to express that difference. For at least one day out of the whole year.

To me, the purpose of a pride march is for the "oppressed invisible" to take up space for an afternoon, and to shout, "here I am, here is what is distinctive about me!" I would like to appeal to bisexuals to respect this difference between us and to act as true allies by participating in the march as bisexuals who are in support of lesbian and gay liberation and pride. As a lesbian, I would be proud to support a bisexual pride march, and would like to learn more about the distinctiveness of bisexual oppression and experience. I believe that liberation comes from a true respect for difference, and that alliances that emerge from this respect allow us to confront our common enemies, together.

Lynne Vickery

Last year, at the Pride March rally, I wondered if anyone else thought it all seemed as ironic as I did. As speakers went on about lesbian-bashing, co-optation of the lesbian community, and "lesbophobia," I pondered the ability of the Northampton lesbian community to exclude bisexuals from the one day in the year set aside for celebration. Cries of "oppression!" were heard all around, yet I wasn't welcome to walk down the street in celebration of myself. While not denying the very real homophobia that threatens and harms us all, the fact remains that Northampton's lesbian community is quite powerful within its own sphere, and nothing illustrates that better than the snub we bisexuals got. The power to include or exclude anyone is power indeed.

Most disturbing for me in all of this has been simply not being taken seriously. My feminism, my activism, the very real limitations I experience because of my sexual orientation—all have been trivialized or ignored. It feels to me that there is still much talk about

bisexuals, but little talking *to* bisexuals. If more dialogue had happened before the previous years' marches, perhaps the opponents to bisexual inclusion would have realized that our presence does not by definition mean lesbian invisibility. I am conscious of the debt that I (and the lesbians of my generation) owe to activists of an earlier day. Many brave women worked here to build a community and to chip out a small niche of safety. I pay homage to them as I do to the founders of Daughters of Bilitis and the Mattachine Society, to Harvey Milk, Larry Kramer and all those whose struggles have preceded and informed my own. Just as these struggles are called "movements," the people involved have been in motion: from homophile, to homosexual, to gay, to gay men and lesbians. It is the nature of humankind to grow and change. We can honor the past without being mired in it, limited to its obsolete vision.

It makes me wonder about goals, about that vision. Is the ultimate goal simply to create a safe space for gay men and lesbians to live, or to transform society so that sexual freedom is had by all? *My* goal is to help create a place where sexualities can be freely and fully explored, based on desire, respect and love, rather than on polarized sex roles, on power games between men and women, or on feminist regulations.

I think if I've heard anything in the voices of those who oppose bisexual inclusion, it is fear. Clearly, people feel threatened. Last year, I chanted with some other bisexuals: "We are not a threat!" I don't know how to say it any clearer. I respect the need for separate lesbian space, just as I defend my need, at times, to be with only bisexual women. But our mutual needs to end homophobia and build pride create some overlap. Certainly a day of celebration and fun is one which we can share.

As a bisexual woman, I have been charged with heterosexual privilege. This is a misinformed charge, for to "cash in" on this privilege, I must closet myself, something no less painful for me than a lesbian. And when I am closeted by force or intimidation, all not half of me, lives in darkness. Further, this charge serves to deny the very real privileges many Northampton lesbians do have—usually race, often class, and frequently educational privileges. If we only speak as victims, we will never begin to see our power.

Freedom is not a limited commodity, that we must scramble for like bread crumbs. We have as much room to be as we demand. I worry gay men, lesbians and bisexual people will keep scrambling for the same place, the same small corner of the world we have been allotted. It amounts to a waste of energy and a failure of our collective imagination. There is room for us all and we need to demand it.

Suzanne LaGrande

As I see it, once definitions of community come down to a vote, anything which could meaningfully be called "community"

has already been lost (or never existed). The debate over whether or not to include the word "bisexual" in the pride march, and the larger debate about whether bisexuals, gay men and lesbians form any sort of a community together is fundamentally a debate over the meaning of community—a debate not just about who we want to include in "our" communities, but also about the values which we share and which make us members of these communities.

What it means for us to be a lesbian, gay man, queer, or bisexual is something that we are constantly in the process of creating with others. The experience of going to our families or going to a place where there are no lesbians, gay men, bisexuals etc. makes it clear that our ability to live out our own definitions of lesbian, gay, bisexual etc. identity (as opposed to what these identities mean to heterosexuals) depends on there being other people who, to some extent, share and live out these identities. At the same time, the experience of moving in predominantly heterosexual contexts also makes clear that not all definitions of lesbian, gay, or bisexual identity are the same. The ways in which heterosexuals define and understand "dyke," "faggot," "queer" is usually very different than the ways in which we understand and define ourselves, even if the names are the same. These differences in definition lead us to understand ourselves on one hand as abnormal, unfortunate and/or needing acceptance, and on the other hand as divine, never saner and even potentially dangerous. That is, underlying these differences in definitions are significant differences in values—differences in how we understand and live out our identities—and ultimately in the kind of communities which we create with others. And since these communities are not given to us by birth, but something which we become a part of by embracing a particular identity,

Continued on page 3

### In This Issue

Letters to the Editor	page 2
Survivor's Circle	page 5
Witches Bookshelf	page 6
Dykes to Watch Out For	page 7
Calendar/Announcements	page 8



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## Policy Statement

The *Valley Women's Voice*, a monthly feminist newsjournal, which aims to communicate to and strengthen bonds between women by making them heard in our pages.

The *Valley Women's Voice* is produced on a collective, consensus, volunteer basis by a group of feminists. We do not necessarily agree with all opinions expressed in the *Voice*, but accept responsibility for choosing to print everything in the paper.

We view the *Voice* as an ongoing opportunity for all of us—readers and collective members—to learn more about ourselves, each other, and the many truths of feminism.

## CONTRIBUTION GUIDELINES

The *Valley Women's Voice* welcomes letters, essays, narratives, interviews, newsbriefs, poems, short stories, cartoons,

graphics, and photographs. Written submissions should be 3 to 5 pages typed, double spaced. Your name, address, and phone number must be enclosed with all materials so that we may verify submissions and/or contact you to discuss any necessary editorial changes. A short biographical statement is also appreciated. An author who does not wish her name to be printed should indicate this when submitting items. Please enclose a SASE if you would like materials returned to you. The decision to print materials is made collectively, and all major editorial changes are made in conjunction with the author. However, we reserve the right to make minor editorial corrections to submissions for purposes of clarity and space constraints. Although we cannot afford to pay contributors, we do send a complimentary copy of the issue in which your item appears.

Send submissions to: *Valley Women's Voice*, 321 Student Union Building, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003. If

you have ideas for future articles, or are not sure how your particular interests and talents may add to the paper, call us at (413)545-2436.

## CALENDAR &amp; ANNOUNCEMENT LISTINGS

The *Valley Women's Voice* prints announcements and publicizes events of interest to women. Listings are free and should be kept to 5 lines in length. (Items will be edited to fit space constraints.) Announcements for non-profit organizations will be given preference and additional space when it is available.

Calendar listings should provide the name, date, time, location, cost, sponsor, information for disabled women, recipient of proceeds from the event, and phone number for inquiries.

A nominal fee is charged to print photographs accompanying calendar/announcement listings. Only black and white photographs are accepted.

LETTER  
TO THE  
COMMUNITY

We're talking about our collective politics here at the *Voice*, and it looks as if we'll be having more time and resources to be doing that these days. Three women have joined us as interns for the semester: Laura, Jami, and Chris, and they've already taken off on their respective portions of the paper—but don't let our recent (very relative) prosperity stop you from writing for us, or from attending a collective meeting on Wednesdays at 5:30 pm. We need input and ideas both from University/Five College women and the local feminist community, and we especially need women who are interested in covering local issues and events (including you fantastic photographers out there).

For an upcoming issue (hopefully April) we're looking at focussing on women's reproductive rights and health care. If you're interested in submitting an article on this theme, or want ideas about possible submissions, please contact us right away. The editorial deadline and the deadline for reserving advertising space for the April issue is Friday, March 13 at 5pm. Happy last days of winter.

LETTERS  
TO THE  
EDITOR

*This letter was originally sent to "All Things Considered" radio program.*

Dear ATC:

I was horrified by last night's coverage of the William Kennedy Smith rape trial.

I do not want to turn on my radio and hear the sounds of a young woman sobbing and pleading with her cross-examiners as to why they are asking her such personal questions. I do not need to hear the graphic highlights of the trial: "Did you have your panty hose on when you crossed the lawn?"; "Was the penetration painful?"; "Did the ejaculation take place inside or outside of your body?"

I am haunted by the image of male interrogators pressing yet another woman for X-rated details in a court of law. The Anita Hill trial had the country riveted to their radios in the hopes of hearing ever more lurid details. What could have been a major step forward in terms of encouraging women to step forward and demand justice for those who harm them was reduced to a national bread and circus. It is bad enough that such things are becoming the norm in the courtroom; that "All Things Considered" chose the juiciest tidbits of the Smith trial and passed them off as responsible journalism is truly disappointing.

If I continue to hear such sensation-mongering "news" on your program, I will cancel my support for your program through my local station without hesitation.

Sincerely,  
Ali Croluis  
Amherst, MA

To the Editor:

As with the Clarence Thomas confirmation and the issue of sexual harassment, once again, we are outraged over the perpetuation of myths and unfounded stereotypes about date rape resulting from the recent William K. Smith trial and its outcome.

The messages that emerge from Smith's acquittal serve to reinforce the notion that women survivors who speak out about the violence they have experienced are making false accusations. This highly publicized case distorts the reality that the number of falsely reported rapes is less than 2% of the total rapes that are reported. Another important reality is that only 10% of actual rapes are ever reported to police. Of those, a mere 10% are ever brought to trial.

It is clear from these statistics that women do not easily report rape, even though it happens to one out of four women in their lifetimes. It is also clear, given the way women who do report are treated by the criminal/legal system and the public, why few women would ever want to report an actual rape, much less make one up. The price of revictimization and public scrutiny would be much too high.

Another important point to remember in this case is that Smith was found "not guilty." He was *not* found innocent. When a woman cannot prove a date rape "beyond a reasonable doubt," this does not mean that she was not raped. It means that it is difficult for women to prove that it happened, because of lack of evidence or witnesses. In a date rape situation, when the case boils down to her word against his, women are burdened by common myths and stereotypes that affect their credibility and constrain their self-defense.

Therefore, in a society that does not believe women and instead blames them for their victimization, a survivor of date rape will never receive truly "fair" or "reasonable" treatment by the legal system. Furthermore, in a society in which women are silenced, a woman who has the courage to speak out will not only end up being labeled as "angry," "delusional," and "vengeful," she will also be mistakenly presented as the "aggressor" who hurls rape and abuse charges at a "defenseless" man.

We refuse to collude in this conspiracy of silence and blame that reinforces and perpetuates violence against women. We applaud the courage of the victim in this case as we do that of all women who have survived similar victimization and continue to speak out. While this verdict is discouraging, we stand firm in our commitment to supporting women victims and survivors and to raising public awareness of and sensitivity to vio-

lence against women. Finally, and most importantly, we believe her.

Sincerely,

Educator/Advocates and Counselor/  
Advocates Against Violence Against Women,  
Everywoman's Center, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Dear Sisters:

1992 is fast approaching and with it all the patriotic fervor surrounding the 500th anniversary of the European invasion of the Americas. George Bush and friends will undoubtedly compare the "discovery of the New World" with the New World Order.

As women we understand that relationship only too well.

For the culture and world that Columbus brought to the Americas was one based on military might, racism, sexism, colonialism and heterosexism. A world based on plunder, rape, theft and death.

Well, there's not much difference between that "old world order" and the new one.

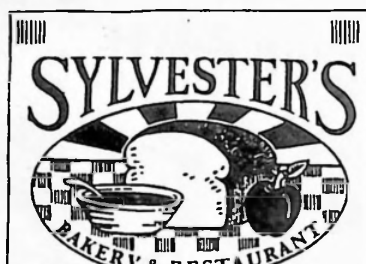
That's why we want to respond to the call from indigenous peoples throughout the Americas for counter quincennial mobilizations.

We are calling on women to commemorate International Women's Day (IWD), March 8, 1992 with the theme: 500 Years of Resistance... Through Women's Eyes. In doing so, we will be joining women throughout the U.S. and the world as they celebrate International Women's Day, as well as speaking of the particularities of Women's lives in this hemisphere.

On International Women's Day we want to raise our voices about women's experiences during these past 500 years of colonialism and patriarchy. What was happening to indigenous women in 1492? to Black women in 1592? to women healers and midwives in 1692? to Mexican women in 1792 and to Japanese, Chinese and Filipina women in 1892? How are our realities similar and diverse given the many communities that we come from? What are all women's conditions and demands now in 1992?

In the U.S. today, control of our bodies continues to be violated—from the loss of abortion rights to the virtual inaccessibility of health care, to genetic engineering. A staggering percentage of Native American, Puerto Rican and Black women continue to be sterilized. The fastest growing population getting AIDS is Black women. It's a land where

*Continued on page 3*



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violence against women and lesbians is endemic, where women are still paid less for our work and are still under and unemployed. More women and children will be homeless on the streets with no options and nowhere to go. Women are locked away in overflowing mental institutions and prisons and it's by no surprise they are primarily women of color who are being "controlled" in this way. Women political prisoners are incarcerated for their activist work against this system.

We want to make sure that women's voices and issues are heard in the year 1992. This IWD let's celebrate 500 years of women's resistance! Let's keep in touch and share our ideas. Let's demonstrate, hold forums, have house meetings, read poetry, participate in rituals and celebrate women loving other women. Let's raise our voices with women from Canada to Chile, from Europe to the Philippines, from South Africa to Palestine!

Join Us As We Celebrate IWD '92!

Signatures to date:

Austin Women's Peace House, Break The Silence Mural Project, Chicano Human Rights Council, Dorchester Women's Committee, Chicago Emergency Clinic Defense Coalition, Foundation For A Compassionate Society, GABRIELA Network (solidarity with women in the Philippines), International Indian Treaty Council, Institute for Research, Training and Development of Salvadorean Women (IMU), Movimiento Liberacion de Nacional Women's Caucus (Puerto Rico), Lesbians and Gays Against Intervention, Out Of Control Lesbian Committee to Support Women Political Prisoners, Roots Against War, San Francisco Women Against Rape, Union Of Palestinian Women's Association, Women Against Imperialism, and The San Francisco Women's Building

Send correspondence to: Women Against Imperialism, 3543 18th Street, Box 14, San Francisco, California 94110

Tel: 415/995-4735

To the Editors,

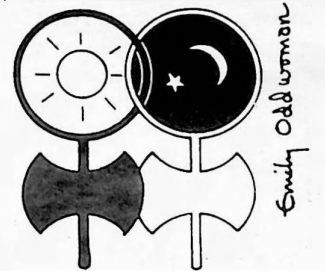
The vote that took place February 2 regarding the annual Lesbian and Gay Pride March was in no way indicative of the feelings of the lesbian and gay community. It must be understood that the lesbian and gay community did not determine the inclusion of bisexuals in our annual event. Voting was open to anyone—anyone living anywhere, with any sexual preference. It is a reflection of society at large—a society very used to silencing minority feeling.

I have been a lesbian living in this valley for 20 years. I have seen many changes in our various communities and realize that this particular turn of events is not uncommon in many political movements. New groups with similar struggles but undeveloped political agendas, social networks and culture, often force inclusion into dynamic existing groups. They then go on to develop their own focus and agenda, leaving the original group disenfranchised. Original members usually fade away after a fight, aware that their own needs will no longer be met.

This is exactly what has happened in this process. The fact that a heterosexually married couple are now members of the Steering Committee, helping to create an agenda that supposedly addresses lesbian needs is entirely ludicrous. The official count was nearly 400 votes. This is a tiny figure—tiny—not at all indicative of our community. Most women didn't vote because our energies are already redirected back to our own community.

Lesbians have developed a political and cultural network here which will continue to flourish. Unfortunately, at least for a time, assimilation is in vogue and many have jumped on the bandwagon.

Lis Brook  
Amherst, MA



### Opinions, continued from page 1

we are all participants in the process of creating those ways of being, values, style, etc. which make up the meaning of lesbian or gay or queer or bisexual identity and community.

So as I understand this debate, it is a conflict over the meaning that different groups give to their identities and by extension, the kind of communities we are attempting to create. Some bisexuals as well as some gay men and lesbians understand their identity primarily as a sexual identity—a matter of how and with whom they express their erotic desires. Since these desires and modes of expression are not acceptable to the straight majority, anyone who experiences discrimination or social censure based upon their sexual practices can belong to this community.

On the other hand, some lesbian feminists, including myself, understand lesbian identity to be a political identity in that being a lesbian offers the possibility of women understanding and seeing one another independently of the ways in which they are understood and seen by men. Since patriarchy and compulsory heterosexuality require that women be understood and seen only in terms of their relationships to men, lesbian-

ism, understood as a resistance to this construction of women, is political—it is about the construction of values which threaten the maintenance of the status quo. Understanding lesbianism in this way seriously calls into question whether gay men and bisexuals do and can form a community with lesbians; that is, it is not clear to me that the political project of constructing a view of women not defined by men is at all a part of some gay men and some bisexual identities and communities.

Understanding lesbian, gay and bisexual identity as a sexual identity has led to the creation of a community whose shared, underlying values are based on tolerance and acceptance for various kinds of social practices which the straight society has deemed "deviant." Many people in this community argue that accepting and tolerating a variety of different sexual expressions is a way of respecting differences—a way of creating a "diverse" community where members need not share values in order to be considered part of the community.

I agree that we need to be able to develop communities in which there are differences among members, even significant differences in values in a way that does not mute but affirms these differences. However, I do not believe that going for tolerance does this. Tolerance breeds a kind of superficial understanding of one another's differences, one which acknowledges them, but stops there, does not explore them, try to take them on, or let them interfere with one's own values. Nor does tolerance allow for the possibility of critically examining or rejecting

one's own or another's values. And it makes those who do this the enemies of the community, the "intolerant." This ethic of tolerance only allows diversity to exist as long as it doesn't significantly question the values which hold the community together.

However, critical questioning and willingness to challenge one's own or other's values and willingness to stand behind these values is exactly what we need to begin to build the kind of community in which I want to live, the kind of community that does not reproduce heterosexual and sexist values, among others. Such critical questioning cannot be developed in a community where all conflicts are cut short in the name of "healing" and unity. Conflict may not always be pleasant, but the depth of our relations depends on exploring rather than attempting to quell our serious conflicts and differences with one another for the purpose of expedience. Respecting differences means living with tensions and it means that questions about the meaning of these differences cannot be decided with a vote. If all a community asks of us is to answer yes or no, our relationships, and our possibility for creating a community that has any significance to us, are indeed shallow. Almost as shallow as being a citizen in the united states of america.

The community I am interested in creating is a political community: a community

in which our central values are developed together through struggle—through significant questioning of our own and other's values. A "community" whose members do not struggle together to develop shared values—but instead leave individuals to hold their own individual values while determining "community" values by a vote—cannot really be called a community in any deep sense.

Ali Woolwich

I see the Pride March as a coalition-politics event. Every year Gay men, Lesbians and Bisexual women and men of various political persuasions, as well as heterosexual allies—through groups like Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (P-FLAG)—come together for a public showing of love, strength and commitment to breaking down the barriers created and maintained by a heterosexist society.

Bisexual people experience the same heterosexist discrimination in the streets, the workplace, the courts, in schools and other institutions as lesbians and gays. This is part of our common ground. Bisexual people have struggled outside of the dominant heterosexist framework to develop a positive self-concept

Continued on page 4

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ideas for a changing world

## Opinions, continued from page 3

and identity. This is another part of our common ground. To say that lesbians, gays and bisexuals have no common motivation for activism is as unrealistic as not recognizing and taking into account our differences.

As a bisexual woman and political activist, the term "bisexual inclusion" is both inaccurate and frustrating to me. Bisexual women and men have been part of the modern gay liberation movement since the Stonewall Riots. To have the conflict surrounding the Pride March dubbed a debate over "inclusion" seems preposterous when the fact is that bisexuals have *always* been active members of "the community." We are not invaders, we are insiders, seeking to encourage openness among our own. The push for our orientation to be put into the title of the Pride March has been for the sake of our visibility, and for recognition of our contributions to the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual community.

As a member of the 1992 Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Pride March Steering Committee, I know that bisexual voices will be heard, but not at the expense of or due to the exclusion of lesbian voices. Those who are concerned or interested in the Steering Committee's process of decision making and representing the great variety of interests and needs of our community are welcome to our open meetings which are being held every Sunday, 2-5 pm, in the offices of Northampton Family Planning. Or feel free to give me a call at the UMass LBGA office: 545-0154, or at home: 586-2587. I personally value constructive feedback, and look forward to seeing you in Northampton on May 2, 1992.

## Sarah Dreher

For decades, lesbians in this Valley have been trying to help the general public understand that to be a lesbian means to be a complete, complex, fully-functioning human being: it is a life style—meaning a style of LIFE, every minute of every day, not just what we do in bed; that we have a political perspective, and political and civil needs and rights; that we are defined by more than our "sexual minority" status. The unfortunate decision to change the Lesbian/Gay Pride March to a celebration of sexual diversity sets that movement back twenty years.

There are many complex issues here, most of which have been cussed and discussed *ad nauseum*. I have no wish to go over old ground. Nor will I spend time detailing once more the underhanded, sometimes-violent, and illegal methods used by those who attempted to take over the March in the past. These things are fully documented elsewhere.

What I would like to remind your readers of is the bogus nature of the "Community Vote" which was taken on February 2. Imagine that the local pushcart vendors have their own, small union. The Teamsters decide that they want to take over the Pushcart Union and incorporate it into the Teamsters. Some of the pushcart vendors think they'll be stronger if they join the Teamsters. Others fear they will be swallowed up in the larger Union, and lose their control over their own agendas. Some just don't care one way or the other. Arguments go back and forth. Some of the Teamsters cry and say they are "hurt" that the pushcart vendors don't want the Teamsters to represent pushcart vendors. Finally, it is decided that a vote will be taken. The question is: will the Pushcart Union become part of the Teamsters?

But here's something strange. The Teamsters will be allowed to vote on whether the Pushcart Union will be absorbed into the Teamsters. Excuse me? Wasn't it the place of the Pushcart Union to decide what IT wanted to do? Wasn't that the issue in the first place?

Think about it.

Many of us on the 1990 and 1991 Lesbian/Gay March Committees have made the decision to devote our good lesbian energy to furthering the cause and celebration of our lesbian community. The Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Parade Committee does not represent us, our needs, or our issues. We are proud to be lesbians. We will continue to say that on every occasion, in every way.

## Jessica Patton

I have always felt resistant about "defining" my sexuality, categorizing myself by something which seems so amorphous. Yet, after coming to Northampton, I felt pressured for a definition. So I called myself "queer." I love women and men; I try to look at people for who they are rather than what their genitalia is. Nope, "queer" was still too ambiguous, drawing looks of suspicion, as if I hadn't really answered the question. Okay, okay...I'm in love with a woman, so how about "lesbian?" Will I be with a man again in my lifetime? Probably. Will most women in their early 20's, who self-identify as lesbian? I won't touch that one... How about "bisexual?" This has never been especially comfortable for me, either. Talk about looks of suspicion. We all know about those bi's, right? Fence sitting, AIDS spreading, using the privileges of both communities, passing, eventually leaving their women lovers for men. In reaction to these ridiculous stereotypes, more than for any other reason, I (loudly) identify as bi.

After feeling condemned for this definition at last year's Pride March, after watching a community of women, already so marginalized because of our gender, become more and more splintered and divisive, I saw symbolic importance in voting "bi" back into the name of the march. But I was angered at the need for the vote in the first place. I envisioned all the homophobes I know sitting around a large table, laughing and shaking their heads at our in-fighting as they tallied up the wasted hours and emotions we had directed back at ourselves rather than targeted at them, the job discriminators, the queer-bashers. And honestly, having defined positions on the steering committee seems kind of humorous. What happens to the 4:4:4 ratio if, say, a gay man comes out as bi? A bi woman as a lesbian? Where is the representation for S/M people? Transvestites?

Pride is a celebratory emotion. It should honor the individuality and beauty of those courageous enough to explore and express their capacity for love in its broadest definition. Pride for these shared differences is instantly qualified by requiring definitions, these definitions exclusive by their existence alone. "The Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Pride March" is a start in progressing from exclusivity to inclusivity. "The Queer Pride March," being able to see ourselves as united individuals rather than as categorized by definitions, should be the ultimate end.

## Amy A. Ford

I am a lesbian who has been saddened and angered by the recent events in our community. The vote taken on Feb. 2 was invalid because it included bisexuals in the voting process. The movement itself should determine its own destiny (I wasn't allowed to vote for Yeltsin!).

As a result, for the 1992 March there is a married couple (yes, husband and wife) on the Steering Committee.

How does this represent the blood, pain and sacrifice of the herstory/history of the Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights movement? This change shows a lack of respect for

Lesbian and Gay people.

What's next...heterosexual allies will want to be included in the title of the march...

...and the heterosexual allies will get to vote on it!

## Aileen Journey

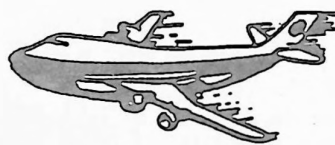
I have been involved in the Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay versus Lesbian, Gay controversy since 1989 when I went to a meeting to work on the 1990 march. At that meeting of fourteen of us, a vote was taken to determine the march be called The Lesbian and Gay Pride March. I was very frustrated by that process because it did not include the rest of the community. I felt very powerless and vowed never to deal with the queer community in Northampton again. I, coincidentally, soon moved to Boston for the next two years.

I am now back in Northampton again and my views have changed on the community, both because of the productive energy that was put into this controversy and because of the comparison to Boston's activity or, better said, lack thereof. In Boston there is very little discussion of the issues of lesbian or bisexual visibility at all. Here issues are not only being discussed, but being effectively dealt with. I much prefer this way of action.

I am very excited about working closely with people who both agree and disagree with my personal opinion on this question. I feel that although this was a divisive and often, unnecessarily, nasty conflict, it proves to us and to others that queers can continue to function in spite of disagreements and that we are individuals with widely varying opinions. We can now be out of the closet as both queer and individuals.



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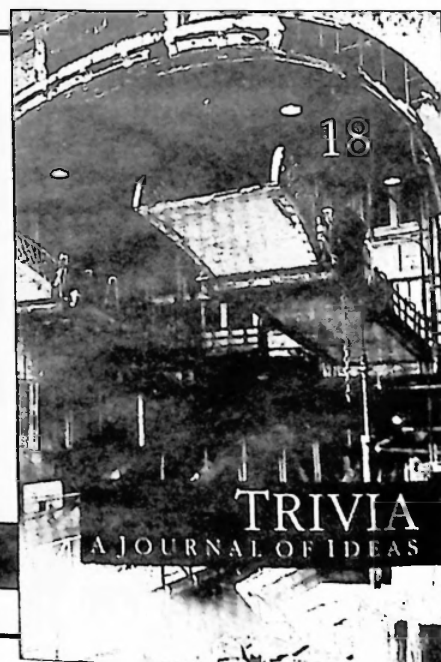
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# Survivor's Circle

*Survivor's Circle is a space for women survivors of child/adult abuse (sexual, emotional, physical) to share their thoughts, poetry, stories, artwork, resources, etc. If you know of a conference, workshop, or other event of special interest to survivors please let us know! We welcome submissions of all sorts. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions please feel free to contact JC Tibbo at the VWV or at home, 413/253-9807.*

## Incest the Hush Hush Topic?!!

by Billie-Jo Smith

I want to say this isn't easy for me to write or admit to, and I'm sure there are many women who feel the same way. We have been taught to be ashamed and to hide such goings on because "What would people say?" Well I don't care anymore, I have my own children to think about! Incest has been occurring in families for many years and has hurt millions of children. I think it's about time that society took a serious look at it. For many children the effects of incest are everlasting.

Many people look at all abusers as "dirty old men," but there are just as many sick and "dirty" women in the world also. When you think of a grandmother you may think of a sweet little old lady who could do no wrong, but this isn't always true either. My grandmother wasn't very sweet, and her hands confused my life for many years. As a child there was nobody to trust or turn to, not even my own mother (who went into denial). In my mother's mind I was the one who was wrong and made up stories. Well, I'm still telling the same story and feeling the same hurt. My little sister, who was also abused, shares similar memories. I don't blame my grandmother for my sexual identity, but I do blame her and my mother both for the confusion I had in my childhood and throughout my life. If enough women would come out and say this happened to them, maybe we'd

have the enough believers to make the world a safer place for the children of today and also the future. We need not only to teach our children to talk, but we also need to talk for them sometimes! A five year old can't fight back! I hope I hear more voices than my own.

### WHY?

I wish I knew why you did this to me;  
Oh God, why can't this agony set me free?

You're buried way down deep in the dirt;  
and I don't understand why I still hurt.

Why did you treat me like I was your lover;  
and threatened for me not to tell my mother?

How could you act so crazy and wild  
didn't you care I was just a child?

Why did you treat my baby sister the same;  
didn't you feel any kind of shame?

Why did you make me so confused,  
how would you like to be sexually misused?

I'd pull you up out of the dirt;  
and pull you apart if I thought it would hurt.

But all it would do is make me cry.  
Please Gramma, tell me why???

—Billie-Jo Smith

### THE TRUTH

I see  
my eyes  
my self  
my soul—  
not my father  
who claims credit  
for my existence  
he  
abused  
this blood tie  
and  
I  
can not  
forgive him.

He can't help it  
—Mom said—  
His whole family is like that  
I don't care  
if that's the excuse  
for his shouting wrath  
He stabbed my heart  
(I saw him  
when I was four  
wrapped around the lady  
from the coffee shop  
in the front seat  
as I sat  
in the driver's seat  
staring at the wheel  
No one believed me)  
Now 18 years later—  
I know the truth.

—Anonymous

### SUBMISSIONS SOUGHT: LOOKING FOR STORIES FROM RITUAL ABUSE SURVIVORS

We are putting together a book of stories, poems, journal entries, drawings and any other submissions, by and for RA survivors. We encourage you to write about your experience. Some suggested subjects are: childhood memories and healing, spirituality, living as a multiple, internal cooperation, having perpetrator personalities, discovering personalities that are still in contact with the cult and your/their process of getting free, experiences with dealing with cult infiltration, dealing with your family of origin and cult infusion, coming out in the world as a ritual abuse survivor.

Please send all writings typed. Deadline: 4/12/92. No material will be returned. Please send to: Amazing Graces, 1430 Willamette #258, Eugene, OR 97401. This is anonymous, if you wish to have your name on your writing, let us know what name you want to use.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lecture, "Child Sexual Abuse: Poems by a Survivor" by Anna Bowen, an English and Women's Studies student at UMASS. The presentation is part of the Women's Studies Brown Bag Lunch Series, and will be held in Campus Center room 804-808 at UMASS on March 25, 1992.

Incest Survivors' Thinktank. A monthly drop-in group giving survivors of incest and child sexual abuse an opportunity to reflect about the cultural context of incest, to debate feminist theories on child sexual abuse, and to develop strategies for political change. This is not a therapy group. Incest survivors, however, will function as facilitators. Spring Program: April 1 "Ritual & Satanic Abuse: Political Implications of Speaking Out or Remaining Silent"; May 6 "What Role Does Religion Take in Abuse"; June 3 "The Impact of Survivor Work on Society". 7:15pm-9:15pm, please be on time. For info contact The Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, MA 02139. (617)354-8807.

Peer Support/Discussion Group. For survivors of child sexual assault. Group not based on a 12-step philosophy. We rely (loosely) on the Courage to Heal and open discussion. Monday nights @ the Bangs Community Center, South conference room, Amherst. Wheelchair accessible. For info contact Roz @ 256-6451 or Ingrid @ 586-7699.

Planning Meeting for all women interested in creating an art exhibit of works by survivors of assault & intimate violence. Come share your ideas of how we can break silence together. Monday night, March 23, South conference room, Bangs Community Center, Amherst, 8pm. Wheelchair accessible. For info call Becky @ 586-3040.



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by Peg Aloï

## THE COMING OF THE LIGHT

Oimele, or Imbolg, or Candlemas, celebrated on February 2, is a welcoming of the returning warmth and light of spring. It is also a festival honoring Brigid (pronounced "breed"), in which she is welcomed into a home prepared by ritual sweeping and decorated with candles. All evergreen must be removed from the house by this date, or ill luck may follow. In Gardnerian and other Celtic-oriented traditions, the ritual of Imbolg is an elaborate one. The priestess is asked to wear a crown of lights, and the altar is decorated with spring flowers, if any are available. A "bed" is prepared for Brigid, she is bid welcome, and the Horned God is invited to mate with her. If, in the morning, there is a phallus-shaped impression in the "bed," the coming year will bring abundance.

Psychologically, as we turn our thoughts inwards, focussing on our own growth and relationships when the weather begins to turn cold (as at Autumn Equinox or Samhain), the coming of spring reminds us to focus on external matters, particularly our connection to the Earth and the turning Wheel of the Year. This may translate into a plethora of activities: housecleaning, reassessment of goals or priorities, beginning a garden, starting an exercise program, taking a new direction in study or reading, or learning a new skill. Late spring is the time for daydreaming and falling in love every ten minutes, but this earlier period of late winter, when the ground is gradually softening and the buds are still tiny on the trees, is still apt to be brutal enough to keep us alert and aware. Particularly for those of us in Western New England, the thawing interspersed with the snow squalls that sometimes last until May can be really unnerving. But we know it will end soon. Those who suffer from seasonal depression will feel in better spirits, as the days grow longer.

While this may seem a proper time for

fasting, stringent cleansing of the body is best left until later in the spring, when the body is not dependent on extra calories and fat stores to provide warmth. Fasting in cold weather may create a temporarily-depleted immune system, even as fasting itself is extremely beneficial for cleansing the body of impurities. The best seasons for fasting are just after the Vernal Equinox, and just before the Autumnal Equinox. Obviously, the increased availability of fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as most people's tendency to eat less and to increase outdoor, physical activity makes summer a season where we are already engaged in a modified cleansing regime.

Last month, I said I would offer some information about pagan gatherings and festivals. This is a perfect time of year to collect information and start making plans for the warmer months. Listed below are some regional and not-so-regional festivals. I'm sorry I can't give a personal or even impersonal review for each one; though many of my friends have attended many of these events, their opinions of them differ so radically that I think the best course is to choose carefully and hope for the best. Nothing is ever lost, because all gatherings offer an opportunity to network, and meet friends. (Note: I got most of this information from Harvest, a Boston-based newsletter. A comprehensive newsletter of festivals is available from: L. Cornett, 9527 Blake Lane, Apt. 102, Fairfax, VA, 22031. A one year subscription is \$4.00.)

Some general information: These things almost always cost money, but, for what you get, it's usually not unreasonable (unlike some New Age weekend seminars that start at \$500 per person). Usually they are held at campsites, with participants asked to bring tents and gear and sometimes food. Other gatherings take place at cabin-equipped facilities, and offer a meal plan. Some gatherings are highly-structured, with detailed schedules of events available; others are deliberately casual, with plenty of opportunities

for socializing. Most of them, I would say, can answer any questions you will have before you actually put down any money, so do write for information first. I am doing some more research on gatherings for women only; these will appear in next month's column.

### Coming in May:

Medicine Wheel and Earth Gatherings in St. Louis, Missouri. A "Native-American centered gathering," with workshops, dancing, healing, ceremonies, etc. Write to Karen Kelly, 115 Carmel Woods, Ellisville, MO 63021.

Heartland Fest, near Kansas City. Janet and Stewart Farrar appeared there last year. Contact Heartland Spiritual Alliance, P.O. Box 3407, Kansas City, MO 66103.

Rites of Spring, sponsored by The Earthspirit Community, in Western Mass. This is a huge gathering, with workshops, sweatlodges, drumming and dancing circles, children's activities, merchants' wares. Folks come from miles around. For info write to Earthspirit, P.O. Box 365, Medford, MA 02155.

Women-Earth Spirit, a spiritual gathering for women. Contact Seven Oaks Pathwork Center, Route 1, Box 86, Madison, VA 22727.

### Coming in June:

Wic-can Fest, in Shelburn, Ontario (near Toronto). One week, children under 13 come for free. Contact Wic-can Fest, P.O. Box 125, 3090 Danforth Ave, Scarborough, Ontario, M1L 1B1, Canada.

Free Spirit Festival. Takes place in Maryland. Workshops, music, rituals for men and women (separately or together), dancing, etc. Write to Free Spirit Alliance, P.O. Box 5358, Laurel, MD 20726. (Note: I have heard nothing but good stuff about this one, from a vast array of people, including Norse Pagans, radical faeries, Thelemites, Rainbow People and Druids.)

Pagan Spirit Gathering, sponsored by Circle. Camping, bonfires, rituals, workshops.

Contact Circle, P.O. Box 219, Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin, 53572.

Gathering of the Tribes in Georgia. Many Pagan leaders and writers are invited to this annually, though they don't always show up, I'm told. You must register for this in March. Write: Gathering, c/o Church of Y Tylwyth Teg, P.O. Box 674884, Marietta, GA 30067.

Solstice Earth Gathering, in Mid-Atlantic area. Write to Lou DeSebala, P.O. Box 5719, Takoma Park, MD 20912.

Other gatherings I will try to get information include: Starwood, Ecumenicon, Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, the Dianic Wicca Conference (Starhawk and Luisah Teish were at the last one), Earth Drum Council, the Rainbow Gathering and others in the Northeast.

See you next month. Blessed Be.



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So It Goes

Get off yer BUTT, you little ungrateful dyke!

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I'm a JOINER!

And although you may dislike me IMMENSELY, it's 'cuz of ME that you have dances, hot lines, rap groups, rallies, and newsletters at your disposal.

When I was your age and coming out back in '73, I had to walk 10 miles in the freezing cold snow to get to the nearest dyke rap group. So GET INVOLVED

IT'S EMPOWERING!!

This bit of GUILT was made possible by a group of angry lesbians near YOU.

So can you volunteer to stuff envelopes for my "Sisters of Sappho" group?

Sure! Do you need anyone to carry a sign at a protest?

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DID YOU SEE THE SUNSET? IT WAS SPECTACULAR!

UHH-UH.

THE BUS WAS SO JAMMED I COULDN'T SEE ANYTHING.

WHINE!

ONE PHONE BILL, 6 NOT-FOR-PROFIT DONATION REQUESTS, AND 12 MAIL-ORDER CATALOGS FOR YOU...

ONE CREDIT CARD BILL, 2 AMAZING OFFERS AND 12 IDENTICAL MAIL-ORDER CATALOGS FOR ME...

THICK, PATCHOULI-SCENTED ENVELOPE AND A HEFTY, CAREFULLY WRAPPED PACKAGE FOR YOU.

BESTILL MY HEART.

IT'S NOT FAIR, GINGER! YOU HAVEN'T HAD ONE PIECE OF JUNK MAIL IN MONTHS!

YEAH, OR ANY CAR TROUBLES, OR WORK CRISES OR ZITS EITHER! AND YOUR PMS HAS VIRTUALLY DISAPPEARED.

I WISH I WAS IN LOVE.

WHAT'D SHE SEND THIS TIME? KIWI-FRUIT BATH GEL? GORPSS-SHAPED CHOCOLATES? CRYPTIC-LOOKING VIBRATOR ATTACHMENT?

STUFFED DATES, INDIVIDUALLY WRAPPED IN FUSCHIA TISSUE! AND A PHOTO!

SEE? HERE SHE IS! THIS IS MALIKA!

GINGER, WHAT A BABE! I MEAN, UH... SHE LOOKS SO CALM AND CENTERED!

WHOAH! SO WHEN'S SHE COMING?

SOON AFTER SHE GETS HERE, I HOPE.

**Spurned for the Moment**

127

©1991 BY ALISON BECHDEL

UHH.

DON'T GO!

IT'S COLD OUTSIDE LET'S STAY IN BED ALL DAY.

C'MON, BABE. TIME TO GO EKE OUT OUR LIVINGS.

I'M SERIOUS, MO! IT'S BEEN CALLED BY SICK AND MADE LOVE ALL MORNING!

AN, HON, I'D BE TOO GUILTY AND ANXIOUS TO RELAX. HOW ABOUT SOME OTHER DAY, WHEN WE'VE PLANNED AHEAD?

NO, YOU CAN'T PLAN IT AHEAD! THAT WOULD DEFEAT THE WHOLE PURPOSE! YOU'RE THE ONE WHINING ABOUT BEING IN A RUT. TRY BEING SPONTANEOUS FOR ONCE.

BUT JEZ IS EXPECTING ME AT THE STORE.

C'MON! -KISS- WHAT'S THE POINT OF BEING ALIVE IF WE NEVER STOP TO ENJOY IT? TIME IS A PRECIOUS GIFT! WE CAN'T WASTE IT ALL ON THE RAT RACE!

WELL...

WHAT BETTER WAY TO CELEBRATE LIFE THAN BY SPENDING THIS BEAUTIFUL DAY WORSHIPPING THE GODDESS OF LOVE?

UH...

ROUTINE IS DEATH! LET'S LIVE FOR THE MOMENT AND COMMUNE WITH OUR WILD INNER NATURES!

MMM. OKAY. COMMUNE AWAY.

OH, FUCK! WHAT?

I FORGOT, I'M BEING EVALUATED BY THE REGIONAL SUPERVISOR TOMY! I'M LATE!

**Good House-keeping**

129

©1992 BY ALISON BECHDEL

OUR COMBUSTIBLE COHABITANTS HAVE CONVENED FOR THAT LOATHESOME BUT UNAVOIDABLE PHENOMENON, THE HOUSE MEETING!

DRIFTS OF DOG HAIR. SLIME IN THE BATHROOM SINK. FOUR MONTHS OF NEWSPAPERS STACKED IN THE KITCHEN. AND THE REFRIGERATOR! I'M AFRAID TO GO NEAR IT WITHOUT PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND A GAS MASK!

LOOK, WE CAN THINK OF IT AS A RITUAL OF RENEWAL! WE'LL ALL SPEND A DAY TOGETHER, THROWING OUT THE OLD, CLEANSING AND PURIFYING TO MAKE WAY FOR THE NEW! IT'LL BE SO GROWTHFUL!

SPARROW, SPARROW, SPARROW. WE'RE OBVIOUSLY NOT TALKING ABOUT HOUSECLEANING HERE, WE'RE TALKING PRIORITIES. A CLEAN SINK MAY BE IMPORTANT TO YOU, BUT I HAVE MORE RELEVANT GOALS IN MY LIFE.

DON'T YOU THINK IT'S A LITTLE SELFISH TO EXPECT ME TO TAKE TIME OUT FROM MY VALUABLE POLITICAL WORK, WHICH BENEFITS THE WHOLE COMMUNITY, JUST SO YOU CAN HAVE SPARKLING BATHROOM FIXTURES?

YEAH, RIGHT. THAT WAS PROBABLY GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING GOING ON IN HER BED-ROOM LAST NIGHT.

LISTEN. THE WAY I SEE IT, THE REAL ISSUE HERE IS OUR CLASS DIFFERENCES. LOIS, YOU COME FROM AN AFFLUENT SUBURBAN FAMILY. YOU GREW UP TAKING A NICE HOUSE FOR GRANTED...

YOU NEVER FELT ASHAMED OF YOUR PARENTS' UGLY USED FURNITURE. YOU NEVER SPENT THE FIRST MONEY YOU EVER EARNED ON A PAISLEY BEAN BAG CHAIR, SO YOUR FAMILY'S LIVINGROOM WOULD LOOK MORE LIKE THE ONES ON TV!

VERY TOUCHING, GINGER. BUT IT DOESN'T EXPLAIN WHY YOU'RE AS BIG A SLOB AS LOIS IS.

HEY! I'M WORKING LIKE A DOG TO PUT MYSELF THROUGH A PH.D. PROGRAM! I DON'T HAVE TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THE SHINE ON OUR LINOLEUM!

MAYBE YOU SHOULD DISCUSS THIS CLEANLINESS COMPULSION WITH YOUR ADULT CHILDREN'S GROUP, SPARROW.

MAYBE I SHOULD JUST NEVER REVEAL THE WHEREABOUTS OF A PARTICULAR BLACK LEATHER JACKET AND A CERTAIN OVER-STUFFED MAUVE ENVELOPE THAT ARRIVED IN THE MAIL THIS MORNING ADDRESSED TO GINGER "ANGEL LIPS" JORDAN.

THIS PLACE IS A TOTAL STY!

LIKE I ALWAYS SAY, YOU CAN'T BEAT VACUUMING FOR GROWTHFULNESS.

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# CALENDAR

## March 1-8

**Conference:** Second Annual Majority Women's Conference & Celebration of Women of Color: Building Global Coalitions Between Women of Color. Conference for those identifying as women of color. 12 events throughout the week, workshops on self-esteem, health issues, white women against racism, homophobia, education, multi-racialism & multi-ethnicity; films on Maya Angelou & "Mitsuye and Nellie"; panel; student poetry readings & art exhibit; & more. Mt. Holyoke College. FMI call 538-2045.

## March 1

**Music:** Patty Larkin, singer, songwriter, & guitarist. Coffeehouse Series. \$8 (\$2 with Amherst College ID). Amherst College Campus Center Frontroom, 8 pm.

## March 2

**Lecture:** "The Role of Women in Shaping Physical Education and Athletics in the United States." Panel presentation. Mt. Holyoke, Dickinson House Living Room, 4:30-6:30 pm.

## March 3

**Lecture:** "Promoting Gender Awareness in the Classroom: An Example from Germany," with Ingrid Sommerkorn, Universitat Hamburg. Mt. Holyoke, Dickinson House Living Room, 7:30 pm.

**Lecture:** "Reflections on My Life and My Work: As Woman, As Jew, As Artist," with Wendy Wasserstein, preeminent theatrical chronicler of the momentous changes in the lives of women over the last generation. Smith College Wright Hall Auditorium, 7:30 pm.

## March 4

**Reading:** Women's Studies Brown Bag Lunch Series. Dorothy Ukaegbu, graduate student in Anthropology, will read from "Oguinye: The Life and Times of a Pre-Colonial Slave Lord," a novel based on oral tradition. UMass Campus Center 804-808, 12:15-1:30 pm. FMI call 545-1922.

**Films:** The Arab World: Women and Cinema Series. "Permissible Dreams" and "Camera Arabe: Twenty Years of Arab Cinema" plus lecture by independent video producer Alia Arasoughly. Free. Amherst College Stirm Auditorium, 7:30 pm. Films will be shown again Smith College Wright Hall 3/5 at 7:30.

**Play:** "Tales of the Lost Formicans," written by award-winning playwright and UMass alumna Constance Congdon. A bittersweet look at contemporary life in America. \$5 (\$3 students). Show runs 8 pm, March 4-7 in the Rand Theater of the UMass Fine Arts Center. For tickets call 545-2511.

## March 5

**Lecture:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Brown Bag Lunch Series. Michelle Barale, Amherst College, will speak on "Inside/Outside: Finding a Lesbian Text." UMass Campus Center 911, 12-1:30 pm. FMI call 545-4824.

**Symposium:** "Behind Glass: Native American Representation in the Year of Columbus," with 4 women panelists. Addresses issues of representation of Native Americans in museums, photography & popular culture. Smith College Neilson Library Browsing Room, 4:30 pm. FMI call Smith College Anthropology Department.

**Film:** "Half the Kingdom," seven Jewish women strive to find common ground between Jewish tradition and contemporary feminist principles. Free. UMass Hillel House Lounge, 7:30 pm.

**Lecture:** "Caribbean Visions of the (Un)natural in Novels by Simone Schwarz-Bart and Toni Morrison" with Leyla Ezdinli. Part of Unnatural Women: Questions of Character and Culture Series. Smith College Neilson Library Browsing Room, 7:30 pm.

**Performance:** "The Opposite Sex is...Neither!" with Kate Bornstein. One-woman act exploring several characters who are at various points of sexual transformation. \$12 (\$7 students). Northampton Center for the Arts, 8 pm. FMI call 584-7327.

## March 7

**Dance:** Gender-free international folk dance for the benefit of AIDS services in Western Mass. Louise Brill will be the caller. Grace Episcopal Church Parish Hall, Amherst, 8-11 pm.

**Comedy:** "The Urban Sarcasm of Judy Gold," an innovative stand-up comic. \$5 (\$1 Amherst College ID). Amherst College Campus Center Frontroom, 9 pm.

## March 8

**Lecture:** An International Women's Day Event: "Women and AIDS: Honduras, Puerto Rico and Holyoke." AIDS educators and activists discuss AIDS and women. Smith College Stoddard Auditorium, 4-6 pm.

## March 9

**Lecture:** "Sojourner Truth in Northampton," with Margaret Washington from Cornell University. Smith College, Seelye 10, 4:30 pm.

## March 11

**Performance:** Women's Studies Brown Bag Lunch Series. Lesbian PreOccupied Theater, political, lesbian theater in process. UMass Campus Center 917, 12:15-1:30 pm. FMI call 545-1922.

**Film:** The Arab World: Women and Cinema Series. "Women of Southern Lebanon." Free. Amherst College Stirm Auditorium, 7:30 pm. Also shown Smith College Wright Hall 3/12 at 7:30 pm.

## March 12

**Lecture:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Brown Bag Lunch Series. Jean Grossholtz, Mt. Holyoke, will speak on "Lesbian Politics: Fight 'em or Join 'em." UMass Campus Center 911, 12-1:30 pm. FMI call 545-4824.

**Film:** "Entre Nous," a French film exploring an intense relationship between two women. Free. UMass Campus Center 908, 7 pm.

**Lecture:** "On Women and Science" with Vandana Shiva, Director of Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Natural Resource Policy. Mt. Holyoke, Mary Woolley Hall, New York Room, 7:30 pm.

## March 15

**Art:** Opening reception for "A Secret Garden," a meditative installation space by Valerie Gilman, Leverett Crafts and Arts in Leverett, MA, 2-4 pm. Exhibit runs through April 30.

## March 20

**Storytelling:** "Women of Spirit" with 3 women storytellers. Jay Goldspinner, Rebekka Tipples and Rochelle Wildfong perform a variety of stories of women from different parts of the world: historical figures, folklore & contemporary stories. \$7 (\$4 students). Northampton Center for the Arts, 8 pm. FMI call 584-7327.

## March 21

**Dance:** The Mary V. Womyn's School of Dance presents the 5th annual Oldies But Goodies Womyn's Dance. Music from 50s, 60s, & 70s will be played by DJ Mary V. Dance contest too. Tickets are available at the door. Northampton Center for the Arts, 8 pm. FMI call Mary V at 586-2473.

## March 23

**Reading:** "Eye-to-Eye: Telling Stories, Breaking Boundaries." Keynote lecture for Gayla Week, readings of work by African-American lesbian writer Sabrina Sojourner and Jewish lesbian writer Jyl Lynn Felman. Smith College Neilson Library Browsing Room, 8 pm. Smith College's Gayla Week, celebrating lesbian, gay and bisexual culture is March 23-28. FMI call 585-3533.

## March 24

**Lecture:** "Let Me Tell You Who I Think I Am: An Exploration of Psychological Themes and Research on African-American Women," with Alice Brown-Collins of Wellesley. Mt. Holyoke, Dickinson House Living Room, 7:30 pm.

## March 25

**Lecture:** Women's Studies Brown Bag Lunch Series. "Child Sexual Abuse: Poems by a Survivor," with Anna Bowen, student in English & Women's Studies. Campus Center 804-808, 12:15-1:30 pm. FMI call 545-1922.

**Seminar:** Gayness/Oppression/Homophobia Seminar Series. "Athletics: Heterosexism/Homophobia." Springfield College, Room 233 Locklin Hall, 7-9 pm.

**Films:** The Arab World: Women and Cinema Series. "A Measure of Distance" and "The Fertile Memory," two films about Palestinian women. Free. Amherst College Stirm Auditorium, 7:30 pm. Also shown Smith College Wright Hall, 3/26 at 7:30 pm.

## March 26

**Lecture:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Brown Bag Lunch Series. Stashu Kybartas, Hampshire, will speak on "Representations of Gays and Lesbians in Video." UMass Campus Center 911, 12-1:30 pm. FMI call 545-4824.

**Lecture:** "Other Mothers," with Meredith Michaels, Hampshire College. Part of Unnatural Women: Questions of Character and Culture Series. Smith College Neilson Library Browsing Room, 7:30 pm.

**Reading:** Leslea Newman reads from her poetry. Mt. Holyoke Women's Weekend, Mary Woolley Hall, New York Room, 7:30-8:30 pm.

**Theater:** "My Snow White," one-woman show by Motoko Maeda-Dworkin offers intimate account of a Japanese woman's journey from youth to adulthood. Hampshire College, Red Barn, 8 pm. FMI call 549-4600 x339, evenings.

**Play:** Sleeveless Theatre presents their latest collaborative comedic venture, "The F-Word," examining the current status of feminism in America against the backdrop of women's history. \$5-\$7 sliding scale. Northampton Center for the Arts, 8 pm. FMI & reservations call 586-7282.

## March 27

**Lecture:** "Fifty Years of Women's History in America," with Jill Ker Conway, MIT. Smith College Neilson Library Browsing Room, 2:30 pm.

**Dance:** Amherst College Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay Alliance will sponsor a dance. Amherst College Campus Center Frontroom, 10 pm - 2 am.

## March 28

**Café:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Café Series. Dane O'Hara and his "The People Who Could Reflect Clouds," a performance piece/audience participation/creation myth exploring the origins of gay, lesbian, bisexual people. Also, opening the evening, local women performers, to be announced. UMass Hampden Theater, 7:30 pm.

**Music:** "Goddess Gospel: A Capella Woman Soul," part of Mt. Holyoke Women's Weekend, Mt. Holyoke, Blanchard Campus Center 8-10 pm.

## March 29

**Lecture:** "One Woman's Journey: Challenges Toward Making a Difference," with Kathy Alexander. Part of Mt. Holyoke Women's Weekend, Mary Woolley Hall, New York Room, 1-3 pm.

**Lecture:** "Toward an Alternative Discourse: Thoughts on Writing," with Sara Jonsberg, Mt. Holyoke. Mt. Holyoke, Dickinson House Living Room, 4:30-6:30 pm.

## CLASSIFIEDS

Wanted to buy: Scooter, moped, or small motorcycle. Any condition if price is right. Call 586-1521.

Need help with papers, resumes, coverletters...? Call Whole Hog Editing for professional editing assistance with all stages of writing. Student rates available. Call 584-6495.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Community Center:** Plans are still underway to start a LGB Community Center in Northampton. Right now, the project needs an accessible meeting space, expense money, and volunteers. Volunteers and new members are eagerly welcomed. The next meeting is March 3, 7-9 pm, Unitarian Church Basement, Northampton (and the first Tuesday of each month after that). If you can't come to the meeting, but wish to contribute time or money, call Amy at 586-6684, Karen at 585-5895, or David & Jeff at 586-6817; or write L/G/B Community Center Project, P.O. Box 60051, Florence Station, Northampton, 01060-0051.

**The Everywoman's Center:** Winter-Spring hours are Mon-Tues-Thurs-Fri 9-4 and Wed 12-4. Counseling walk-in hours are Mon & Thurs 12-1:30 pm. Call-in hours are Mon-Tues-Thurs 10-11 am & Wed 2-3 pm. Individual & couples counseling are available by appointment. All EWC services are available to women free of charge. Call 545-0883. \*\*\*A Childhood Sexual Assault Survivors Support Group is being sponsored by the Counselor/Advocate Program at the EWC. Facilitated by Pat Jenkins, LICSW, the group runs for 10 Wednesdays from 7-8:30 pm, beginning March 4. Free, confidential, and open to all women. Requires that you be in individual therapy. FMI call 545-0800.

**Volunteers:** The YWCA of Western Massachusetts' battered women's programs, ARCH and New Beginnings, are looking for a few good women. Volunteer to help us help battered women and their children end violence in their lives. Our volunteer training is March 14 and 21 from 9 am - 5 pm. Please call ARCH in Springfield, 733-1588 or New Beginnings in Westfield, 562-5739.

**Conference:** "A Vision of Birth and Parenting," a day of 24 workshops devoted to pregnancy, birth & parenting. March 28, Wright Hall, Smith College, 9-5. Fundraiser for Smith Women for Choice, The Birthing Network, and the The Northampton Parents Center. Childcare available. For pre-registration and fee info. call 586-3179 or 586-6597.

**Feminist Lecture Series: WITCH, Wild Independent Thinking Crones & Hags, present their 1992 feminist lecture series. March 10 through March 29.** All lectures are at Crones Harvest, 761 Centre Street, Jamaica Plain, MA. FMI call 617-868-4785.

**International Women's Day:** The Bunting Institute of Radcliffe College presents an exhibit and reading on the theme "Women and Power." The exhibit will be open March 8-27, 9-5 weekdays, noon-4 Saturdays, featuring small, affordable artworks for sale by women artists; opening reception March 8, 4-7 pm. Also on March 8, 4-7 pm, poets, creative writers and non-fiction authors of the Institute share their work and work by other women who have been neglected or underrepresented. FMI call 617-495-8212, or write The Bunting Institute, 34 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138.

**AARP Tax Help:** Free income tax service for older taxpayers is now available, through April 15, in all senior centers in Hampshire County. This service is sponsored by the American Association for Retired Persons in conjunction with the IRS and the Mass Department of Revenue. Taxpayers are asked to call the senior center nearest to them for more information, in Amherst, Belchertown, Easthampton, Granby, Hadley, Hatfield, Northampton, South Hadley, Southampton, Ware, and Williamsburg.

**March Arts Festival:** The Women in the Arts/New Haven 1992 March Arts Festival is a month-long series of exhibits, performances, films & lectures, featuring the acclaimed Forces of Nature, a Harlem-based dance company who will perform "Ebony Magic" based on the life of the High Priestess of Voodoo, Marie Le Veau, March 13; "New World/Old Crap," a multi-cultural panel of four women artists speaking about the Columbus Quincentenary, March 8; and a two-night festival of films and videos by women filmmakers, March 27-28. FMI call 203-865-0600, or write P.O. Box 6697, Hamden, CT 06517.

**Call for Submissions:** Sage: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women is soliciting essays, personal narratives, interviews, and documents for the upcoming issue. Open issue: on any topic, deadline April 1, 1992. FMI write to Sage, P.O. Box 42471, Atlanta, GA 30311-0741.

**Conference:** Asian Women's Conference March 13, 14, 15 at UMass, Boston, Harbor Campus. Workshops topics: empowerment, coalition, and action. FMI 617-499-9531.